

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

1. (Currently Amended) A disposable diaper of a flat type comprising a rear portion that is to be applied to the back of a wearer, a front portion that is to be applied to the stomach of the wearer, and a crotch portion located between the rear portion and the front portion including an absorbent member, the rear portion having a waistband portion oppositely extending from each side thereof, at least one of the waistband portions having a band fastening member near the free end thereof so that the opposite waistbands are fastened together on the front side of the wearer, wherein

a pair of standing gathers are formed on the longer sides of the diaper positioned in spaced parallel relationship to each other along said crotch portion,

a low stiffness region R1 having a bending stiffness of 25 cN/50 mm or lower in the diaper width direction is provided in a region of the crotch portion having the absorbent member in its thickness,

wherein said region of said crotch portion further has a high stiffness region R2 disposed between laterally separated low stiffness portions and a bending stiffness of higher than 25 cN/50 mm in the diaper width direction, and wherein the low stiffness region R1 is an oblong region provided along each longer side edge of the absorbent member in said region of said crotch portion.

the standing gathers on each side are fixed at an extension ratio of 100% or higher, and  
the tensile characteristics of the standing gathers on each side measured in their state not fixed to the diaper are such that the tensile load required to extend to an effective extension ratio

is 20 to 120 cN and that the increase rate of tensile load required for extending from an extension ratio of 20% up to the effective extension ratio is 1.0 cN/% or lower, the effective extension ratio being 30% lower than the fixing extension ratio.

2-3. (Cancelled)

4. (Original) The disposable diaper according to claim 1, which is for an infant, wherein the smallest width of the crotch portion is 100 to 240 mm.

5. (Original) The disposable diaper according to claim 1, which is for an adult, wherein the smallest width of the crotch portion is 150 to 300 mm.

6-8. (Cancelled)